

Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Communication covered from all angles at the Kentucky State Fair

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FRANKFORT, Ky. - Communication in all its forms will be on full display, thanks to technology demonstrations, discussion topic presentations and hearing screenings, at the Kentucky State Fair from Aug. 14-24.

The Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing has partnered with the Heuser Hearing Institute, the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) and Hamilton Relay to create the interactive and informative forum during the fair.

Volunteers will conduct demonstrations of the latest communications technology including videophones, web-based relay calls, CAPTel captioned telephones and amplified telephones. On selected days consumers can learn how real-time captioning works as well as get information on how the switchover to digital TV signals in February 2009 will affect captioning.

For the first time, fair goers may learn about hearing loss and effective communication strategies through a series of presentations on the Blue Ribbon Stage. The presentations run 45 minutes in length and are scheduled for eight of the state fair's 11 days, with most occurring in the afternoon hours. This display is located in the air-conditioned South Wing of the Kentucky State Fair and Exposition Center.

The Heuser Hearing Institute will also have licensed audiologists on site daily to conduct hearing screenings. Last year more than 2,000 people were screened for hearing loss during the state fair. Audiologists also use a video otoscope to give fair goers a live view of the ear's interior.

"I know this sounds clichéd but it really takes a village. However, that village can also be confusing because a person might need many services and it's tiresome to try and contact five or six different groups before they finally get help," said Virginia L. Moore, interim executive director of the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. "This partnership converges these groups and services into one convenient place so people can have easier access to what they need. What we're doing is bringing the village to the people."

Volunteers from each organization, along with American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, will be available to answer questions and distribute literature pertaining to deaf and hard of hearing issues. Requests for applications will be taken at the KCDHH portion of the booth for anyone who needs an amplified telephone or would like further information about other programs sponsored by the agency.

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The Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing has spent a quarter century providing effective and efficient leadership, education, advocacy and programs to eliminate barriers and to meet the social, economic, cultural and intellectual needs of deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.